



# SIERRA CLUB

*Connecticut Chapter*  
*P.O. Box 270595*  
*West Hartford, Connecticut 06127*  
connecticut.sierraclub.org

**Testimony Before the Government Administration and Elections Committee,**  
**March 4, 2022**

Dear Government Administration and Election Committee Chairs Flexer and Fox, Vice-Chairs Haskell and Thomas, Ranking Members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco and distinguished members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our more than 40,000 members and supporters in Connecticut, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on two important bills before you today.

The Sierra Club is committed to defending everyone's right to a healthy world by tackling the serious challenges of a warming climate, unprecedented levels of pollution, the waste management crisis, biodiversity loss, the dangers of toxics and the right of communities to determine how to address these challenges. Fossil fuels are the main driver of climate change as well as unhealthy air, and therefore our most powerful tool to address both is to create a rapid and equitable transition away from fossil fuels to clean and renewable energy across all sectors of our economy. Plastic is contributing to the climate crisis and, along with hard to recycle materials, the waste management crisis. The climate crisis, pollution, toxic chemicals, overharvesting, and loss of habitat are threatening the biodiversity of the state and our planet. Toxics are also threatening the health and well-being of our residents, particularly children. The ability to vote to determine the future of how our state moves forward addressing these issues is the key to solving them.

**SB 184- An Act Extending Through November 8, 2022, Several Changes**  
**Regarding Election Administration as a Result of Covid-19 and Concerning**  
**Eligibility to Vote by Absentee Ballot**

**HB 5262- An Act Revising Certain Absentee Voting Eligibility Statutes**

Sierra Club Connecticut supports both SB 184 and HB 5262. These bills address absentee voting within the continued context of the Covid19 pandemic.

Voters should be able to vote this year by absentee ballot as COVID19 and other communicable diseases persist. Please continue the COVID19 safety measures of 2020 and 2021 for 2022 and allow for everyone who fears exposure to disease to vote by absentee ballot.

Vaccinations and other measures have helped lower the threat of COVID19, but it is still a threat to many folks in the state. We still have many elderly and immunocompromised residents that are at serious risk from this disease and other communicable diseases. We must protect both their health and their right to vote.

In 2020 and 2021, Connecticut conducted elections allowing for these absentee ballot provisions. It in no way compromised the validity of the process. In reality, it opened up the process to many who might not otherwise have been able to vote.



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More than 650,000 Connecticut voters voted by absentee ballot in the 2020 CT General Election—which means they voted early on their own schedules. This led to record breaking 80% voter turnout. Listen to the voters, the choice is clear. Please protect the freedom to vote and support SB 184 and HB 5262. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ann Gadwah, Advocacy and Outreach Organizer  
Sierra Club Connecticut